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DiBIASE WINS THE MISSOURI STATE TITLE

VICTORY
SPORTS
SERIES

THE Wrestler

EXCLUSIVE:
HOW BOB BACKLUND
TRAINED TO DESTROY
KILLER KHAN



Dusty Rhodes vs. Dick Murdoch

IS THIS WAR
DUSTY'S FAULT?



0

OFFICIAL WRESTLING RATINGS

WORLD WRESTLING FEDERATION

Champion: BOB BACKLUND

- 1—STAN HANSEN
- 2—KILLER KHAN
- 3—PEDRO MORALES
- 4—HULK HOGAN
- 5—SGT. SLAUGHTER
- 6—KEN PATERA
- 7—LARRY ZBYSZKO
- 8—PAT PATTERSON
- 9—RICK MARTEL
- 10—TONY GAREA

AMERICAN WRESTLING ASSOCIATION

Champion: VERNE GAGNE

- 1—NICK BOCKWINKEL
- 2—BILLY ROBINSON
- 3—JOHN STUDD
- 4—DINO BRAVO
- 5—CRUSHER BLACKWELL
- 6—JIM BRUNZELL
- 7—MAD DOG VACHON
- 8—TITO SANTANA
- 9—GREG GAGNE
- 10—JESSE VENTURA

MOST POPULAR

- 1—ANDRE THE GIANT
- 2—BRUNO SAMMARTINO
- 3—DUSTY RHODES
- 4—MIL MASCARAS
- 5—BOB BACKLUND
- 6—RICK STEAMBOAT
- 7—PEDRO MORALES
- 8—WAHOO McDANIEL
- 9—DINO BRAVO
- 10—JUNKYARD DOG



STAN HANSEN



JIM BRUNZELL



TONY ATLAS



RICK STEAMBOAT

NATIONAL WRESTLING ALLIANCE

Champion: HARLEY RACE

- 1—RIC FLAIR
- 2—TONY ATLAS
- 3—DUSTY RHODES
- 4—RICK STEAMBOAT
- 5—DICK SLATER
- 6—TED DiBIASE
- 7—BARRY WINDHAM
- 8—MASKED GRAPPLER
- 9—ERNIE LADD
- 10—KERRY VON ERICH

TAG TEAMS

- 1—PAUL JONES & MASKED SUPERSTAR
- 2—TONY GAREA & RICK MARTEL
- 3—JESSE VENTURA & ADRIAN ADONIS
- 4—THE FREEBIRDS
- 5—GEORGE WELLS & DEWEY ROBERTSON
- 6—BOBBY JAGGERS & R.T. TYLER
- 7—THE MOONDOGS
- 8—THE SAMOANS
- 9—RAY STEVENS & JIMMY SNUKA
- 10—RANDY ROSE & DENNIS CONDRIY

MOST HATED

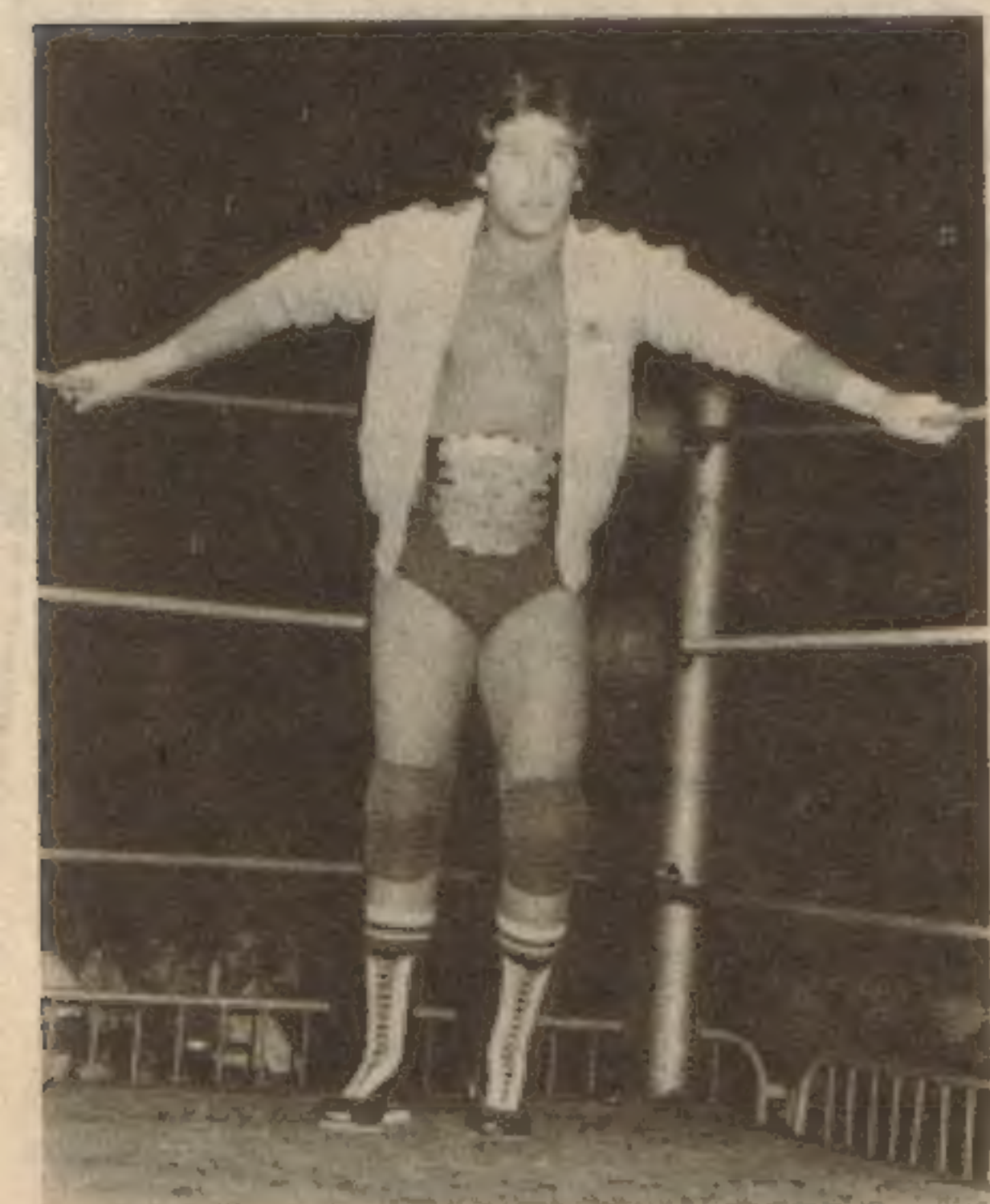
- 1—STAN HANSEN
- 2—LARRY ZBYSZKO
- 3—KILLER KHAN
- 4—GREG VALENTINE
- 5—MASKED GRAPPLER
- 6—KEN PATERA
- 7—BARON VON RASCHKE
- 8—BUDDY ROBERTS
- 9—EDDY MANSFIELD
- 10—DENNIS CONDRIY

YOU ASKED US

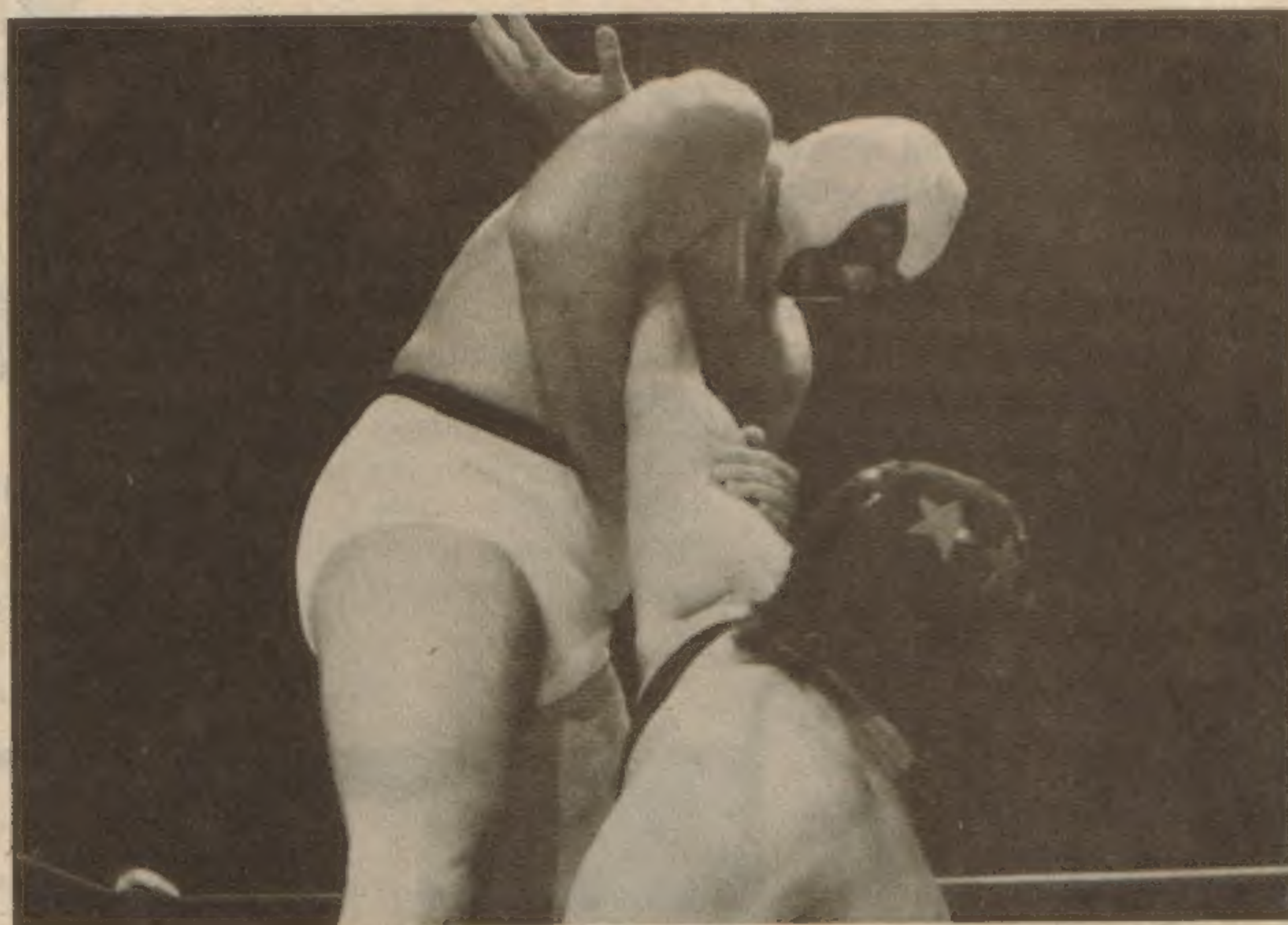
Here's the monthly feature which YOU get to write! It's your chance to have a top wrestler answer YOUR question! Only the best questions will be answered—so put on your thinking caps and come up with some good ones! Address your questions—and who you would like to have answer them—to: YOU ASKED US, c/o THE WRESTLER, PO BOX 48, Rockville Centre, N.Y. 11571. Questions will be answered only in this column and at our discretion!

Q: "Is Ted DiBiase planning to return to the WWF? I heard he was negotiating to wrestle in Georgia. I do hope he will try and work his way over here."—Roz Cook, Bellevue, PA

A: At present DiBiase is firmly committed to wrestling in Georgia and hopes to eventually obtain a title shot with NWA champion Harley



Ted DiBiase is dedicated to winning the NWA title and has no plans at the moment to return to the WWF. He does, however, say hello to all his loyal fans.



After some initial doubt, Mr. Wrestling II has accepted Masked Superstar as a bona fide scientific wrestler. Their past battles (above) were among the most memorable in Georgia in the past few years.

Race. DiBiase thanks his fans and friends in the WWF and says he hopes to see all of them again someday soon.

Q: "Is it possible Mr. Wrestling II and The Masked Superstar

may team since Superstar changed from rulebreaking to scientific wrestling?"—

John Brown, Shelbyville, IN

A: "I've always admired Mr. Wrestling II," said Superstar. "His vision of professional wrestling and commitment to the high ideals of the sport guarantee him a place in any wrestling Hall of Fame. So far, we haven't discussed any team, but I would be honored to serve as his partner." And II replied: "I must confess that I had some skepticism when Superstar first announced he was abandoning rulebreaking. But he's proven himself and I'd like to take this opportunity to welcome him into the family of scientific wrestlers."

Q: "Please ask Bruno Sammartino what he thinks of Hulk Hogan and Larry Zbyszko?"—Timothy Easterling, Durham, NC

A: "You know, my blood just curdles whenever I think of those creeps. I bet every fan
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WHAT'S HAPPENING!

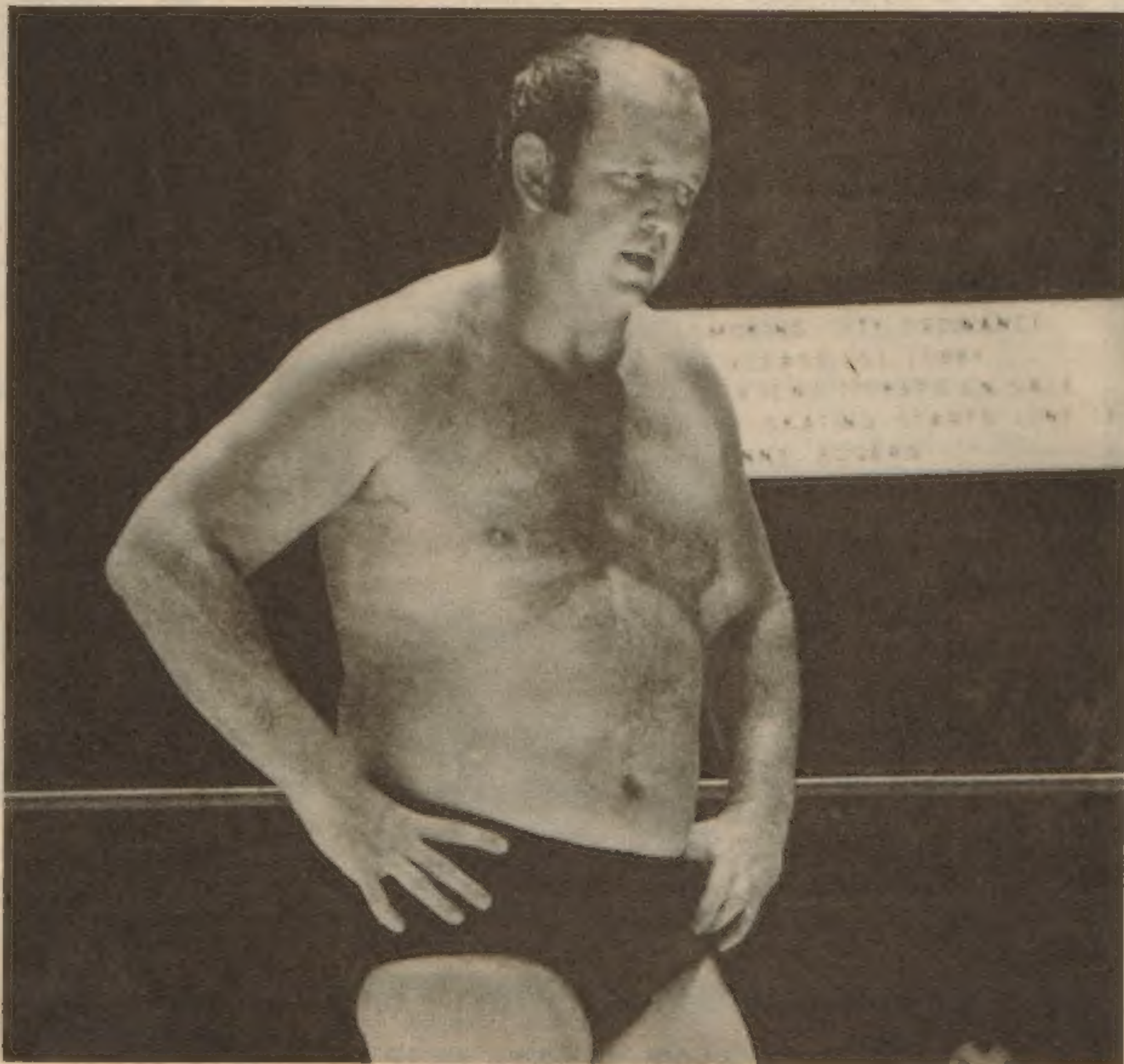
By BILL APTER

DORY FUNK JR. is not exactly taking his loss of the Florida state championship in stride. The day after Barry Windham captured his title, an obviously enraged Funk called our office.

"Apter!" he exclaimed. "I have been robbed. I am definitely the victim of a Windham/Brisco Brothers conspiracy. Something must be done!"

What Funk refers to is this: Dory had Windham pinned—but he was using Barry's trunks for added leverage. The referee counted to three and was about to give Dory back his belt when Jack Brisco, who was observing the match, came into the ring and let referee Scrappy McGowen know what had transpired. Scrappy called for the match to continue, disallowing the fall. An enraged Funk turned his back on Windham and took a swing at Jack as he was leaving the ring. Windham, taking advantage of the situation, snuck up behind Dory and rolled him over for the win.

"They'll all pay for this," were Dory's last words as he



Dory Funk Jr. can't believe he has lost the Florida state title to Barry Windham. Windham's victory has been marred by Funk's claim that Jack Brisco affected the outcome.

slammed the receiver down.

Ernie Ladd is the new Louisiana state king after sending Jake Roberts down to defeat with a helping hand from Super Destroyer . . . Dewey

Robertson and George Wells are now wearing the Mid-Atlantic tag team belts by virtue of a win over The Shepherders . . . The Samoans are headed to

(Continued on page 52)

Every issue, this magazine praises the noteworthy and damns those who violate the spirit of wrestling's dignity. The praiseworthy are given a "thumbs up," the disgraceful are marked with "thumbs down." Here is this month's roll of honor and shame

Thumbs Up



THUMBS DOWN to Dick Murdoch: Nothing is quite so reprehensible as a man selling out his best friend for money. That is precisely what Murdoch did to Dusty Rhodes. Swayed by Lord Al Hays' offer of unlimited funds for matches, Murdoch vowed to wrestle anyone for the right price. Even Rhodes, former partner in The Outlaws. Murdoch deserves universal condemnation and contempt.

THUMBS UP to Rick Martel: As soon as Martel entered the WWF, all WWF rulebreakers trained their sadistic guns upon him. They subjected him to an unrelenting barrage of cruelty and deception. In short, Martel's courage was tested through a tortuous process. But this outstanding young man never faltered until he won the WWF tag team title with Tony Garea.



THUMBS DOWN to Jimmy Valiant: This demon and fellow henchman Tojo Yamamoto indulged in the most disgusting, cowardly act in recent memory. For reasons known only to their perverted souls, they assaulted Tommy Rich's mother. The poor woman had to be hospitalized. Any vengeance Rich implements won't be sufficient for this appalling act.



THUMBS UP to Mr. Wrestling II: Talk about dedication to his fans! For a time, II felt he needed to get away from the grueling pace of wrestling. He thought he could just walk away from it all. But II couldn't ignore the pleas of his fans nor the evil surrounding the Georgia arenas. II returned, stronger than ever.



THUMBS DOWN to Captain Lou Albano: Has this man no shame, no scruples, no conscience? Apparently all Albano cares about are his own selfish ambitions. Witness his newest find, The Moondogs. To call them canine insults man's best friend. To call them human casts doubts upon millions of years of evolution. They're mad and Albano's proud.

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Thumbs Down

Q & A

Each month, **THE WRESTLER** will present a "Question and Answer" forum with an important figure in the wrestling world. It is your chance to meet wrestling's biggest stars as they answer the questions uppermost on the fans' minds



Mascaras' feud with John Tolos has stretched out over a decade. Mil thinks the "Golden Greek" is too stubborn to know when he is beaten.

- Q: Mil, welcome to Q & A.
A: It is my pleasure to be here.
Q: We had quite a bit of trouble finding you. Where have you been?
A: I really don't want to reveal where the last few weeks of my life have taken me.
Q: Why?
A: I am in the process of a big change in my career. For the present time, I must keep my plans a secret. Your readers will be the first to know when my plans are completed.
Q: Okay, we won't dwell on that if you choose not to.
A: That is the way I would like it.
Q: Let's discuss your recent tour of California.
A: I suppose you want to know why I have not yet run John Tolos out of the state.
Q: You must have read my mind.
A: John Tolos is the kind of man who is like the bull. He will keep battling back until someone finally kills him. I feel I taught Mr. Tolos a lesson, maybe tamed him somewhat. I do not intent to kill him.
Q: You brought up an interesting point Mil. Many times, in a fit of anger, you and other wrestlers have



MIL MASCARAS

THE PROTOTYPE AERIAL wrestler, Mil Mascaras has been amazing both his fans and foes for years. Though he has won several important singles and tag team titles, a world championship still eludes him. But that doesn't mean he has lost interest. Mil feels his day will soon come.

Until then he will be content to continue his campaign against all who try to bring down the dignity of the sport he loves.

threatened to kill one another. How far do you think you would really go?

A: Although there are a lot of savage men in wrestling, I still believe it is a sport. I am not out to kill, I just want to beat my opponents and fight for my fans.

Q: Your brother, Dos Caras, has also been wrestling in California for quite some time. Did you convince him to go their with you to do battle with Tolos?

A: Yes. You see there are men like the Enforcer, Ox Baker, and other Tolos types there.

They must be dealt with.

Q: But why by you and your brother?

A: The people in California were always very good to us. Our careers were molded there. We would do anything for the fans.

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Mascaras makes a simple figure-four armlock into an excruciating hold as he plants his right leg along Ivan Koloff's back.

INTRODUCING



TOM PRITCHARD

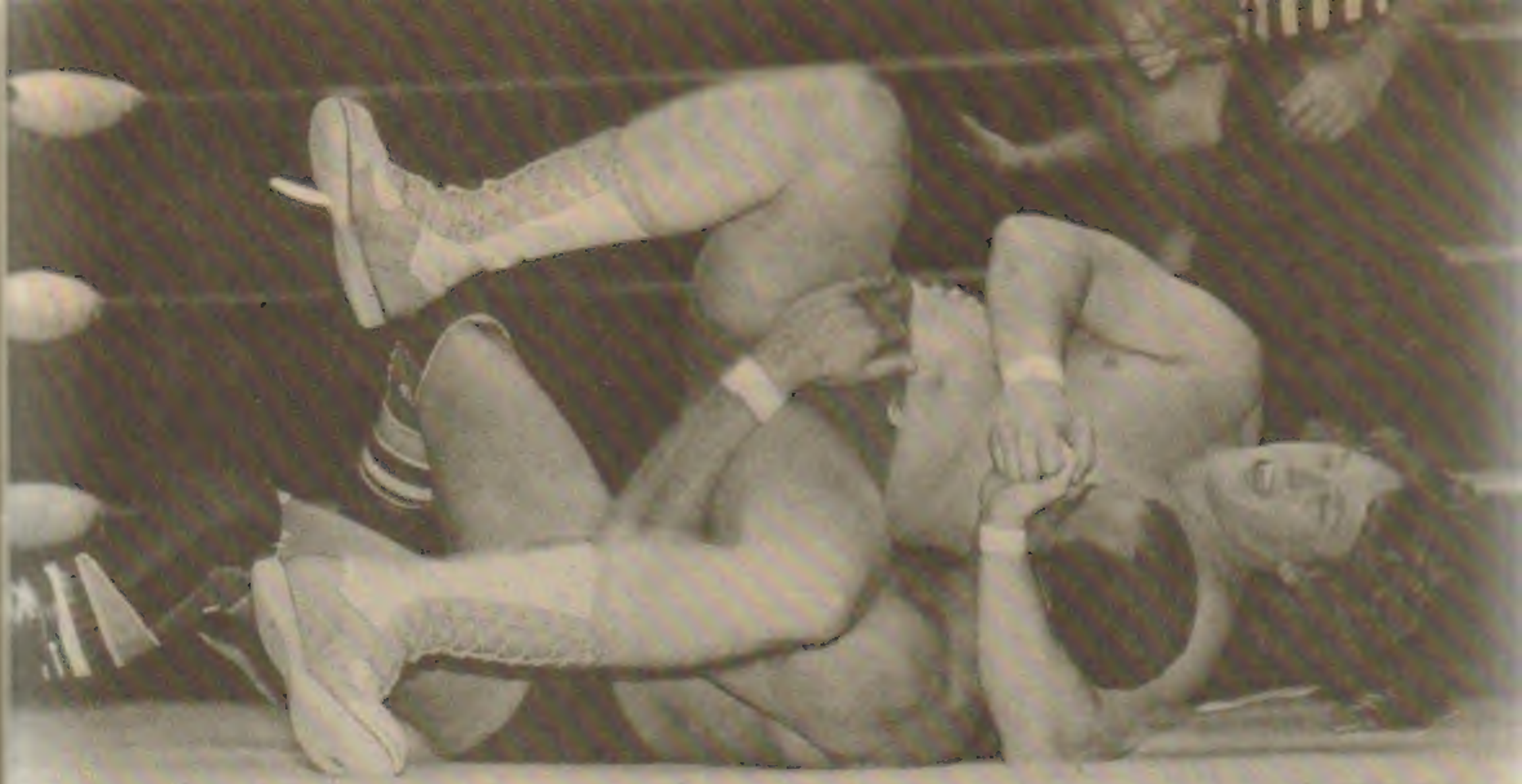
His dream was a common one among youngsters awed by the glory and fury of professional wrestling. Tom Pritchard wanted to become a professional wrestler. He worked hard, studied, and worked in all aspects of the sport, until he felt himself ready. Managing Editor Bill Apter recalls Pritchard's tough climb

By Bill Apter

THE MEMORY IS still vivid. I was on assignment in Houston, Texas, covering a special AWA title clash between Dusty Rhodes and Nick Bockwinkel. I was in the process

of setting up my photographic equipment at ringside when a teenaged kid named Tom Pritchard came up to me and introduced himself. He was quite the conversationalist. For

about 15 minutes we spoke of everything, from the state of wrestling in the WWF to the Bicentennial. Just as the contestants for the first match came to the ring, he said, "Mr.



PHOTOS BY THEO EHRET & JIM CALDWELL

Apter, look at those men in the ring. One day that will be me. I'm going to be a professional wrestler and you'll be at ringside to do a story on me."

A lot of young people tell me that. Usually, they mean it at the time but are unaware of the work it takes to become a wrestler. There was something about this particular boy, however, that told me he was dedicated. He wanted to be a professional wrestler and he didn't sound as if he would stop short of his goal.

Actually, Tom Pritchard first stated that goal at the age of four. "I always watched the matches on television," he said, "but what a thrill it was to see my first match in person. I was hooked.

"I was constantly hanging around the dressing rooms when I was 12," Pritchard continued, "and finally one day Paul Boesch, the Houston promoter, noticed me. I felt like the luckiest kid on the face of the earth when Mr. Boesch said I could have a ringside seat to take pictures at the matches. And when he used one of my

Despite his youth and lack of size, Tom Pritchard will never shy away from more experienced, larger foes. After having his headlock reversed into a cradle by John Tolos, Pritchard shifts his weight forward so his shoulders will not be counted to the mat (above). Tolos uses his left arm to try to free himself from a headlock (below).



photos in his program, I was set. I had a job in pro wrestling!"

At about the same time, Pritchard took an interest in the Martial Arts. His progress was remarkable. Among his accomplishments to date are:

First Degree Black Belt, selected as a member of the American Society of Karate Hall of Fame (ASK); selected as "most outstanding student" for three years by ASK; captained a

(Continued on page 48)

Dusty Rhodes vs. Dick Murdoch:

Dusty Rhodes reaches way back to lend force to a right fist aimed at Dick Murdoch's face.



Who really should accept responsibility for this war? Is it solely Dick Murdoch's fault? Or should Dusty Rhodes bear the burden for this shocking feud? Though many are divided on placing blame for the outbreak of hostilities, all agree the reasons are imbedded deep beneath the surface

IS THIS WAR DUSTY'S FAULT?

PHOTOS BY BILL OTTEN

IT IS VERY EASY, and becoming quite widespread, to assess full and unconditional blame for the war upon the shoulders of Dick Murdoch. Yes, very easy

And very wrong

Quite possibly, the source of this latest and most sickening war is none other than Dusty Rhodes. As distasteful as it might be for some to accept, Rhodes is responsible for the outbreak of hostilities

As most fans know, Rhodes and Murdoch were once partners in the notorious tag team, The Outlaws, back in the early days of their careers.

Violence was an accepted way of life with these two men. They did what had to be done to win a match. In fact, they seemed to thoroughly enjoy the violent aspects of their game and revel in the roughhouse tactics employed in the ring

But ambitions grew and soon became a bit too much for the confines of a tag team. Never once was there any disharmony or rancor. Never once a schism, a split, even a crack in their tight friendship. Somehow Rhodes and Murdoch surmounted the petty jealousies which shattered other partnerships

With total mutual joy, they dissolved The Outlaws

Both went their own separate ways, intent on perfecting their individual styles and pursuing world championships

"We hadda do it," said Rhodes

Each enjoyed immense successes, always corresponding, meeting for backyard barbecues, exchanging perspectives on



There is quite a bit more to the hostilities between Dusty Rhodes and Dick Murdoch than just what appears on the surface. Murdoch (applying an armlock) is reacting to a deep resentment toward his old partner that has built up through the years

upcoming foes, and aiding in strategy sessions.

"I never refused Dusty," said Murdoch

And Rhodes never denied Murdoch. But despite their continued friendship, certain strains in the relationship developed. And the reasons were in large part due to Rhodes' tremendous world-wide popularity.

Over the past year or so, Murdoch's comments showed the growing irritation he must have felt at his former partner's success

"Yeah, Dusty's done okay. Fine, but remember, he had a partner once . . . I've been doin' okay myself."

It must be said in Rhodes' behalf he never uttered one derogatory word about Murdoch, nor ever compared himself with Murdoch, who also enjoyed great success and popularity. Dusty always gave Murdoch credit. Dusty always spoke highly of Murdoch. It was never anything Rhodes said or did. It was simply what Rhodes had achieved.

The publicity Rhodes received started chafing at Murdoch. All Dusty had to do was open his mouth and his remarks were carried in magazines and newspapers across the country, if not the world. This isn't to say that Rhodes is necessarily a better wrestler than Murdoch.

Merely, Rhodes has that intangible called charisma. Murdoch, for all his skills, doesn't quite have that electrifying capacity of Rhodes.

Isn't it inevitable, almost normal for Murdoch to finally feel a degree of resentment toward Rhodes? No matter how close two people are, sooner or later a certain friction develops if they are in the same field.

Broken down to its simplest level, Murdoch wanted to get his share of the glory. And he wanted to win the NWA title. Besides, he wanted the big bucks associated with the world championship.

So Murdoch felt the only way he could leap-frog over Dusty's publicity was to carve out, with bitter ruthlessness, his own niche.

Dusty couldn't understand why Murdoch would do this. He tried

Very few wrestlers have the charisma of a Dusty Rhodes, thus they never attain comparable popularity. This fact has grated on Murdoch for a long time and his true feelings have finally surfaced. Murdoch applies an armlock on Rhodes (above) and pounds away at his face (below).



reasoning with his old buddy, but reason failed. He tried every measure he knows, but Murdoch insisted he had his own goals to realize and damn whoever got in his way.

Yet there is little Rhodes could do about all this. He can't deny his own success. He can't apologize for it. All he can do is fight back his old friend, no matter how much it hurts.

And all Murdoch can do is go about his chosen path. He is obviously content in his bitterness and hate.

This is a classic tale of ambition grown beyond friendship. Apparently even comradeship cannot contain the raging fire of ambition once it gets out of control.

Two men may be consumed by the inferno before it is all over. □

TED DiBIASE WINS THE MISSOURI STATE TITLE

PHOTOS BY
ROGER DEEM

The Missouri heavyweight title, traditionally a springboard to the NWA crown, has fallen into the hands of Ted DiBiase. It was a sweet victory for the young man. Now will DiBiase fulfill the tradition and wrest away the NWA crown from Harley Race?

Ted DiBiase turns Ken Patera's beautiful suplex pinning combination into disaster when he lifts his right shoulder before the three count while Patera's shoulders are still glued to the mat.



TRADITIONALLY, THE MISSOURI state title has been a springboard to the National Wrestling Alliance championship. Present champion Harley Race and former champions Dory Funk Jr. and Jack Brisco first held this prestigious title

Even WWF champion Bob Backlund held the Missouri crown.

Now, after one of the wildest finishes of a match ever, Ted DiBiase joins this glamorous list.

The place was St. Louis. The opponent was Ken Patera, at

that moment holding the Missouri title in his greedy little hands. And the match was brutal.

But wait, the fun had yet to begin. Patera maneuvers DiBiase so the champion could snare the challenger in a suplex, flinging DiBiase into a



Former Olympic weightlifter Ken Patera wraps his massive arms around the midsection of DiBiase, almost bringing a conclusion to the match right there. DiBiase, a determined young man, somehow managed to break free from Patera's grip and take the advantage from his shocked opponent.

pinning position. Patera thought he had DiBiase stopped.

"I thought he was a dead man," said an exhausted, distraught Patera after the bout.

The referee counted to three. On the third count, DiBiase raised his right shoulder. Patera didn't. But Patera thought he won the match, not seeing or even feeling DiBiase lift that precious fraction of an inch off the ground.

"Liar didn't move," yelled Patera.

But the referee, rightfully so, decided DiBiase deserved the pin. And the title.

"I pinned him," insisted DiBiase. "Everyone knows what kind of liar Patera is. His whole wrestling career has been one lie on top of the next. I pinned him, the ref saw him, and the pictures prove it. I don't know what all the fuss is about."

Patera took angry issue with that statement.

"The fuss, the little boy doesn't know what the fuss is all

about?" Patera raged. "This is yet another example of the lousy, stinking conspiracy against me. It seems no matter where I go, no matter what territory I wrestle in, there are people who will do anything to deprive me of my just glory.

"If I'm in the WWF, then I have to worry about the ruling clique of Skoaland-Sammartino Backlund and all, their bribe money out there shoved down refs' throats so they'll look the other way when someone cheats me.

"Look what happened when that buffoon Morales cheated his way past me to win the Intercontinental title. Look who the referee was, his buddy Pat Patterson. You think a creep and low-life mediocre bum like Morales could have ever defeated the great Ken Patera legally? A man like Morales who can't even dial a telephone is going to defeat the great Ken Patera?

"Oh, maybe it's my fault. Maybe I'm just too nice a guy. I trust everyone and I believe the rest of the world will follow some principles, show some morals. Then I get burnt like this. I wonder who bribed the referee for DiBiase. Was it Sam Muchnick, that old gizzard promoter who's made a career out of bad-mouthing me? You can bet that senile old fool would love to see me run out of the sport."

Muchnick shook his head at Patera's comments.

"You have to feel really sorry for any man of Patera's station who feels he has to alibi like that," said Muchnick. "I have a solid reputation in wrestling and resent any charges that I would bribe a referee.

"What Patera doesn't seem to realize is that a talent like Ted DiBiase doesn't need any help in whipping him. DiBiase is an extremely talented young man,



Patera writhes on the mat as DiBiase applies an overlapping toehold (above). Ted sends Patera over his shoulder and across the ring (left). DiBiase is very willing to give Patera an opportunity to regain the Missouri state title. But the confident young superstar feels that the only way he will lose that belt is if he has to give it up in favor of the NWA championship.

just one of the real rising stars of this sport. I predict the Missouri state title will be just the start for DiBiase."

But what of DiBiase? Does he believe his new championship, a belt he worked very hard for and wanted so very much, is now tainted by this controversial ending?

"No, because you can almost bet that a bum like Patera will try and ruin things. He's so damn jealous of everyone else, maybe because he understands how little everyone cares for him, he just hates to see anyone who's liked and who is

successful without having to cheat that it eats him up," said DiBiase.

"Whatever, I know I'm the new champion. I know I won this title fair and square and, in my mind, in my heart, in my soul, I feel no doubt whatsoever. If Patera wants to press the point, let him shut his mouth and meet me in the ring."

"I'll grant any challenger, even a hobo and social misfit like Ken Patera, a chance at my belt," said DiBiase, who paused and smiled impishly. "And I hope other champions will do the same for me." □

EXCLUSIVE

HOW BOB BACKLUND TRAINED TO DESTROY KILLER KHAN

PHOTOS BY STU SAKS & KOICHI YOSHIZAWA

Every so often, the editors of THE WRESTLER happen upon a story so startling, so controversial, and so shocking in its widespread implications we fear to publish it. But our ultimate responsibility is to our readers, and you deserve to know the truth. Thus we print the following amazing article



Just as in Japan, where Bob Backlund learned how to twist his piledriver into an atomic spinecrusher to counter a martial arts maneuver by Antonio Inoki . . .

BOB BACKLUND WAS skeptical. At first.

"I just didn't think there was a really good reason to go there," Backlund said. Then, with his handsome face splitting into a grin, Backlund added: "But I should know by now never to doubt Arnie. He does know best."

Arnold Skoaland realized Backlund's upcoming match against Killer Khan posed serious problems and possibly threatened Backlund's three-year WWF title reign.

"That Khan's a very dangerous man," said Skoaland. "His mastery of the martial arts is almost unparalleled in this sport. But whereas someone like Antonio Inoki has amazing martial arts skills, his use of that mystical knowledge is put toward good.

"Khan is evil, pure and simple."

Skoaland wanted Backlund exposed to the perils of martial

arts. At one point, Skoaland toyed with the idea of hiring a third-degree black belt master to train Backlund.

"I did make some inquiries into it," said Skoaland. "I even went so far as to meet with a couple of guys. But as good as they were and, believe you me, they were good, I thought Bob needed the actual physical experience of wrestling someone in the martial arts.

"Besides, it wasn't so much the martial arts but the way a wrestler applied such skills to this sport," continued Skoaland. "That's when I hit upon Bob going to Japan."

"First reaction? I thought, Arnie's going a little too far," said Backlund. "I've never met a man as thorough as Arnold Skoaland. He doesn't miss one trick, one aspect of wrestling. He'll dig and probe until he finds the way to win

"So he sat me down and explained how dangerous Khan is. He explained how Killer Khan could be the most dangerous man I've ever met and, if I wanted to hold onto my belt, I'd better learn how to whip Khan."

Persuaded by his manager's logic, Backlund accepted the trip to Japan. There he was to meet Inoki in a series of matches.

"I must've spent 30 hours watching films of Inoki," said Backlund. "It got to the point me and Arnie were bumping into walls, we were so punchy and bleary-eyed from watching films.

"But that gave me good preparation. I had something of an idea what I was going up against. All I needed was to get over there and face Inoki in the ring. There's no greater teacher than experience."

Backlund and Inoki had a

(Continued on page 62)



... The WWF champion retains his title by using the same counter to a martial arts maneuver by Killer Khan.

BY STU SAKS

I HAD MY ticket in hand, my bags all packed and ready to go when the cable came into the hotel in Memphis: Ticket waiting at airport. Go to Kuwait. Meet Abdul el-Fatah at Kuwait Hilton. MB.

So Matt Brock wouldn't even give me the luxury of buying a new tube of toothpaste. Sometimes I think Matt enjoys sending me, Morgenstein, and Farhood on assignments simply to get long-distance phone calls. Whatever, I waited nearly an hour in the lobby of the Kuwait Hilton, the stench of sand and camel droppings in my nostrils, for this guy I'd never met and didn't even know what he looked like to arrive.

I must have dozed, understandable enough since I'd slept around four hours the past three days and suffered from severe jet lag. A heavy, nervous hand jostled my shoulder, pulling me out of a deep sleep. From the bemused expressions on passerby's faces, I must have been snoring real loud.

"Mr. Saks?" Heavy lips twitched beneath a flared nose and darting brown eyes. "Yes, are you . . ." His thin, gnarled fingers pressed against my lips, working in concert with the clipped shake of his head and the nervous, dancing eyes scanning the plush lobby. "Where?" I asked, lowering my eyes. He stared. He nodded and mouthed "room 318."

Twenty nerve-wracking minutes passed as I paced behind the locked door. Finally a quiet knock. I whispered at the door, eliciting another tense whisper. I recognized the voice, or thought I recognized the voice. It was only my life at stake.

We spent another few moments eyeing one another. Brusquely, el-Fatah eased onto the edge of a chair, body hunched forward, hands pressed together, his dark, dark eyes drilling into me. I reached for a notepad but his blazing pupils stopped my hand in mid-air.

(Continued on page 64)

Scandal in the Mid-Atlantic:

THE MEN WHO WANT HUSSEIN ARAB TO BE CHAMPION

Once again, one of our brave reporters ventures beyond the borders of the United States in search of a dangerous story. This time, Stu Saks investigates the massive amounts of corporate money put behind Hussein Arab's vile ambitions of a world championship. Who are these men, and why do they want Arab champion?

PHOTOS BY KEVIN KRON



THE RISE



Jesse Ventura obviously never went to barber's school as he tries to remove Mad Dog Vachon's beard the hard way. Ventura and Adrian Adonis were awarded the AWA tag team titles by default when Verne Gagne and Vachon failed to appear for a title defense due to a failure in overseas communications.



THEY WON IT by default. Will they lose it by foolish pride?

"We won it with hard work and our beautiful bods and our great talents," said Jesse Ventura.

Not really. Ventura and Adrian Adonis won the AWA tag team championship by forfeit when Verne Gagne and Mad Dog Vachon failed to appear and defend their title.

"Ah, they were afraid," snickered Adonis. "What difference did it make whether they were too chicken to show up or they did and we whipped their tails right then and there.

We're still the champs, ain't we?" For now.

"And we don't appreciate writers who are too ugly to be alive, who shatter glass from 50 paces, and who haven't had a date with anything resembling a human being in about 40 years, we don't appreciate ugly, smelly writers coming around, poking their four-eyed faces into that which don't concern them," yelled Ventura.

"So we would appreciate it if you ugly people would keep the hell away from us lest you contaminate our gorgeous bods and our gorgeous faces and make us as ugly and as

stupid as you four-eyed freaks," Ventura screamed.

Touchy, touchy. While both Ventura and Adonis are nasty and loud simply to stay in shape, their most recent temper tantrums indicate a deeper problem.

For some time now, many AWA observers, men who have seen all the greats, contend Adonis and Ventura are suffering from a malady common to many tag teams: fear of failure.

On a superficial level, any fear of failure shouldn't be the exclusive province of a tag team. After all, many wrestlers

OF VENTURA



AND FALL



Ventura is headed to the mat after Mad Dog kicks out his legs. Ringsiders have observed a degree of hesitation in the teamwork between Ventura and Adonis which they feel could eventually cause a loss of the title. The champions, however, feel they are unbeatable and resent any criticism.

worry about inevitable failure. But, as veterans of tag teams explain, this failure-fear syndrome is far more acute in a tag team.

"You can always handle and deal with your own flaws or your own strengths," explained Verne Gagne, AWA individual champion. "However, when

dealing with someone else, you add the element of uncertainty."

"As well as you know your partner, and I've been fortunate to pair with Greg Gagne, probably the best," said Jim Brunzell, "you are never absolutely 100 percent certain what he will do. You can practice and practice and practice, talk and talk and talk yet there's

always the chance someone will do something out of tune. When you've got really explosive people like Adonis and Ventura, that unsureness is heightened. They're so unpredictable I bet they usually don't know what the other's going to do."

This has nothing to do with jealousy or suspicion. The partners could be best of friends,

They leaped to dizzying heights in the wrestling sky. All predicted great things for the team of Jesse Ventura and Adrian Adonis. For a while, they satisfied predictions when they captured the AWA tag team championship. But rumors persist schisms are surfacing in their brazen armor, cracks which could cause their downfall

PHOTOS BY TERRANCE MACHALEK

& ADONIS



Ventura hesitated in one of his only chances to tag off to Adonis and once he did the opportunity was lost. Angelo Mosca whips Ventura across the ring (above) and then grabs his head and runs it back the other way into the turnbuckles (below)



as are Adonis and Ventura. They could trust each other totally, as do Adonis and Ventura. But still the slightest bit of doubt remains, always in the back of the mind, tantalizingly so.

In a recent match against Mad Dog Vachon and King Kong Mosca, Ventura and Adonis demonstrated guile and skill, but also a touch of hesitation.

On at least three occasions, Adonis paused to see what his partner would do.

"So, what's it matter? If I'm alone, I don't pause. But ugly fool, you have to in a tag team match," said Adonis.

Twice Ventura hesitated.

"Just waitin' for the right moment," he insisted.

Despite the slight hesitations, the champions managed to retain their title. They did so because, as difficult as it might be for fans to admit this, they re splendid wrestlers.

"Damn straight we're good," said Ventura.

Still, bravado can't keep champions afloat indefinitely. Somehow or another Ventura and Adonis must mesh and meld their thoughts more. Perhaps they think their massive size and natural skills will keep them on top.

They are very wrong. Ventura and Adonis must learn to talk more, to communicate more. They just finally and completely understand what it means to be in a tag team, the almost inhuman demands on someone's psyche.

No one person can possibly know what percolates inside another's mind 100 percent of the time. But if a tag team is to stay successful, they must strive for 100 percent. Right now, Ventura and Adonis are on target 85 percent of the time.

For champions, that is far too long.

"Who says?" shouted Adonis. □

THE MOONDOGS

• MANIACS •

ON A SHORT LEASH

QUITE BLUNTLY, The Moondogs have shocked the professional wrestling world. Neither fans nor journalists nor announcers nor promoters nor managers nor wrestlers know what to make of them. Captain Lou Albano, always eager to maintain a psychological edge, refuses to disclose whether they are, in fact, human beings or mutant offspring of large dogs.

Scorned and scoffed, despised and condemned, The Moondogs seem rather impervious to all the fuss about them.

"Give 'em a bowl of food, some clean water and change the box, that's all they want, they're happy, they're content, they love the Captain, that's all they care about, an occasional biscuit," said Captain Albano.

Others would like to give the canines something else.

"You know, I hate to see maniacs like that come into wrestling and try and cripple people," said Bruno Sammartino. "I think they are too dangerous and someone better get rid of them."

"I don't like The Moondogs, I would beat them up, I ready for action against them," said Pedro Morales.

"Moondogs?" Arnold

treats them, whipping them and all. I treat my golden retriever better.

"Then again, they really worry me. How can you stop beasts, and that's the only word I can use, beasts who don't feel pain, who don't have to understand any human emotions? They would snap off a man's neck and bite his arms if they were hungry. They have barely begun to scratch the depths of their madness and, under Albano, they will be very dangerous. They can't be underestimated," Skoaland continued.

At this exact moment in WWF history, underestimating The Moondogs could prove fatal. Beneath the horrified comments pulses an undercurrent of fear. And confusion.

Strangely enough, the two people who should be most concerned with the 'Dogs are utterly unfazed. Is it that Tony Garea and Rick Martel, current WWF tag team champions, are so good they needn't worry about competition? Or are they overconfident, feeling, as too many others do, that The Moondogs are more bark than bite and not really worth bothering about?

"Oh, we consider all challengers," said Garea. "It



Lou Albano had to do some fast talking after Madison Square Garden held him responsible for the pipes his Moondogs damaged in the dressing room.

Skoaland, manager of WWF champion Bob Backlund, shook his head puzzledly. "What can you say about them? Sometimes I feel very sorry for them, really pity them, especially the way Albano

They are, quite frankly, the weirdest creatures ever to step foot—or paw—in a wrestling ring. Managed by the evil Captain Lou Albano, Rex and King, otherwise known as The Moondogs, are determined to wrest away the WWF tag team title from Rick Martel and Tony Garea

PHOTOS BY BILL APTER & STU SAKS



Above: King tries to rip off Dom DeNucci's left arm. Right: After a biting which opened Tony Garea's forehead, Rex whips the New Zealander across the ring to a waiting King. Below: King attacks Garea and Rick Martel with the belts the Moondogs failed to win.





Above: With referee Dick Kroll shielded from the illegal hair-pull, King drives Martel's face into his knee. Right: Kroll orders King to release Martel's throat. Below: King takes time out during the match to snack on the top rope.



doesn't matter who or even what they are. We make it a policy not to take anyone too lightly."

"Yeah, they're tough and rough and they love fire hydrants," Martel said laughingly in that combination disdain-bemusement all demonstrate when discussing the 'Dogs. "But we're not too frenzied, really. I mean, I don't lose sleep over them. They're just like any other challenger, we gotta prepare for them, plot for them, be careful, but not any more than any other."

Such thinking also ignores the history of Captain Lou Albano. Here is a man who has managed more tag team champions—nine—than anyone in wrestling history. He hasn't achieved such stupendous success by squandering his

twisted genius on losers.

Albano has demonstrated an eerie ability to take the weirdest of men, people one step removed from an asylum and give them purpose and direction. Albano seeks out such types.

If any two lifeforms are entirely suitable for Albano's depraved purposes, it is Rex and King. To belittle them is to underestimate them. Too many confuse the two. Sure, The Moondogs are strange. But they are very dangerous.

"Rex and King are my pals, they man's best friend, they fetch, they beg, they roll over, they play dead, they get my slippers, fetch the paper, and they're gonna fetch me the WWF belts," boasts Albano.

Based on the Captain's past record, can anyone doubt him?" □

**Barry
Windham vs.
Harley Race:**

**THE
MATCH
BARRY
WINDHAM
SHOULD
HAVE
REFUSED**

PHOTOS BY BILL OTTEN



POOOR BARRY WINDHAM. He honestly believed he could outsmart NWA champion Harley Race.

"Ridiculous," said Race.

Young Windham wanted the world title. He wanted the title real bad. When Florida promoters offered the rising young star a shot at the NWA championship, his reaction was immediate.

"Yes, yes, yes," said Windham.

As usual, Race accepted the challenger with boredom and snide disinterest.

"I had to think a while before recalling who the guy was," said Race. "You don't think I can clutter my head with the names of all the stiff's lucky enough to get on the top 10 list, do you?"

"I got better things to do than bother with that. Besides, by the time I can remember the stiff's name, they're usually gone and long-forgotten. You don't see too many prelim bums hanging on for long," said Race.

No matter what or how Race describes Windham, it is both inaccurate and unfair to characterize the handsome youngster as a "prelim bum."

Windham has, in his brief wrestling career, demonstrated an uncommon capacity to maintain poise and translate his vast ambitions into concrete results.

"I never respected guys who just shoot off their mouths and couldn't deliver or back up their words," said Windham. "I know what I gotta do to achieve what I want to achieve. And I know I can whip Race from one end of the NWA to the other."

Harley Race's response to this

pre-match threat?

"Hah."

As the match progressed through its early stages, it did appear Windham would make good on his predictions. At the

opening bell, Windham charged forward and attacked Race with reckless fury.

"I was psyched," said Windham.

Windham seized control, bouncing the champ from ringpost



Harley Race stoops to one knee allowing an onrushing Barry Windham to collide heavily with referee Scrappy McGowan. Windham, who had dominated the entire match and appeared well on his way to being the youngest NWA champion in history, ended up unconscious outside the ring after his momentum carried him over the top rope.

The gravest mistakes a young wrestler can make is in the area of unsound decisions. They can learn all they want about maneuvers, style, and strategy. But a young wrestler sometimes allows his ambitions to lead him down paths for which he is still ill-prepared. Such a near-disaster recently befell Barry Windham





Windham was alert enough to roll out of the way before Race could connect with his flying kneedrop (left). But ultimately, it did him no good. Barry lies defeated outside the ring (above) seconds before lapsing into unconsciousness.

to ringpost.

"That's how I wanted it," said Windham.

What astonished all ringside observers was the manner in which Windham seemed to dupe Race. The NWA champion fell for every one of Windham's feints and maneuvers.

"You call them maneuvers?" asked Race.

Yet Windham astounded Race with the maturity of his moves. One maneuver followed another maneuver and yet another.

"It was a blasted massacre," remarked a veteran Florida journalist.

Twenty minutes into the match Windham stood on the edge of the NWA title.

"I felt it around my waist," said Windham.

And then it happened.

"Sure did," grinned Race.

Windham came soaring off the ropes, directing a flying body block toward Race. But the champion knew it was coming and positioned himself in front of the referee. As

Windham barrelled toward him, Race ducked and the challenger flew over him, crashing into the referee.

"Gee, wonder how that happened," Race clucked his tongue.

As the result of that crash with referee Scrappy McGowan, Windham was knocked unconscious and had to be carried from the ring on a stretcher to the hospital. Fortunately, skull X-rays proved negative and Windham was released soon after.

But the compelling point of this title match had to be sly ol' Harley. All the reporters clustered around the champ's dressing room echoed the same question: Did you set up Windham?

"For what?" Race grinned.

Well, did you let the youngster fall into a sense of false confidence?

"Me?" Race smiled. "Nah. The kid ain't bad. He had me on the run. It can happen, you know." And Race winked, quickly turning his back to hide the ear-to-ear grin. □

TOM PRITCHARD

(Continued from Page 27)

Pritchard made his pro debut on October 20, 1979 in Bryan, Texas, with a win over Satanas #1. After three months, he traveled to Los Angeles where he was undefeated for four months wrestling against such stars as Pampiro Firpo, Jack and Ray Evans, Victor Rivera, John Tolos, and the Great Goliath. In less than six months of wrestling he teamed with Alberto Madril to win the Americas tag team belts from

Goliath and Jack Evans. "I'm proud to say that we held those belts against some pretty topnotch competition for some seven months. They tell me we were the longest reigning champions in the past five years."

Despite his lack of size (200 pounds) Pritchard has the know-how and heart to catapult him to the top of this sport. He told me once that's the way it would be. I believed it then and I still believe it now

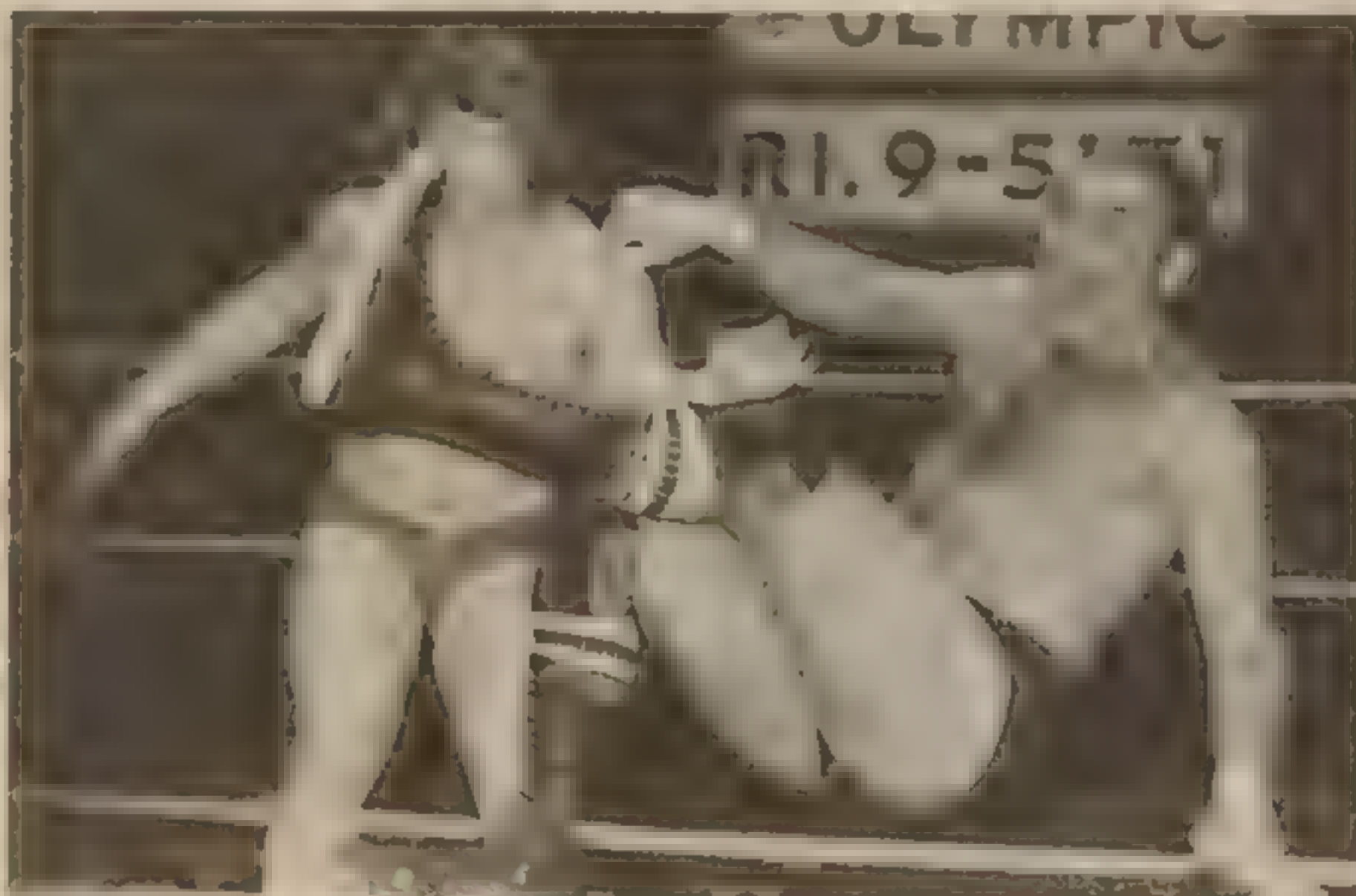
□

Wrestling closer to his 200-pound weight class, Pritchard made a brilliant effort to take the NWA junior heavyweight title from Les Thornton, but came up just short.

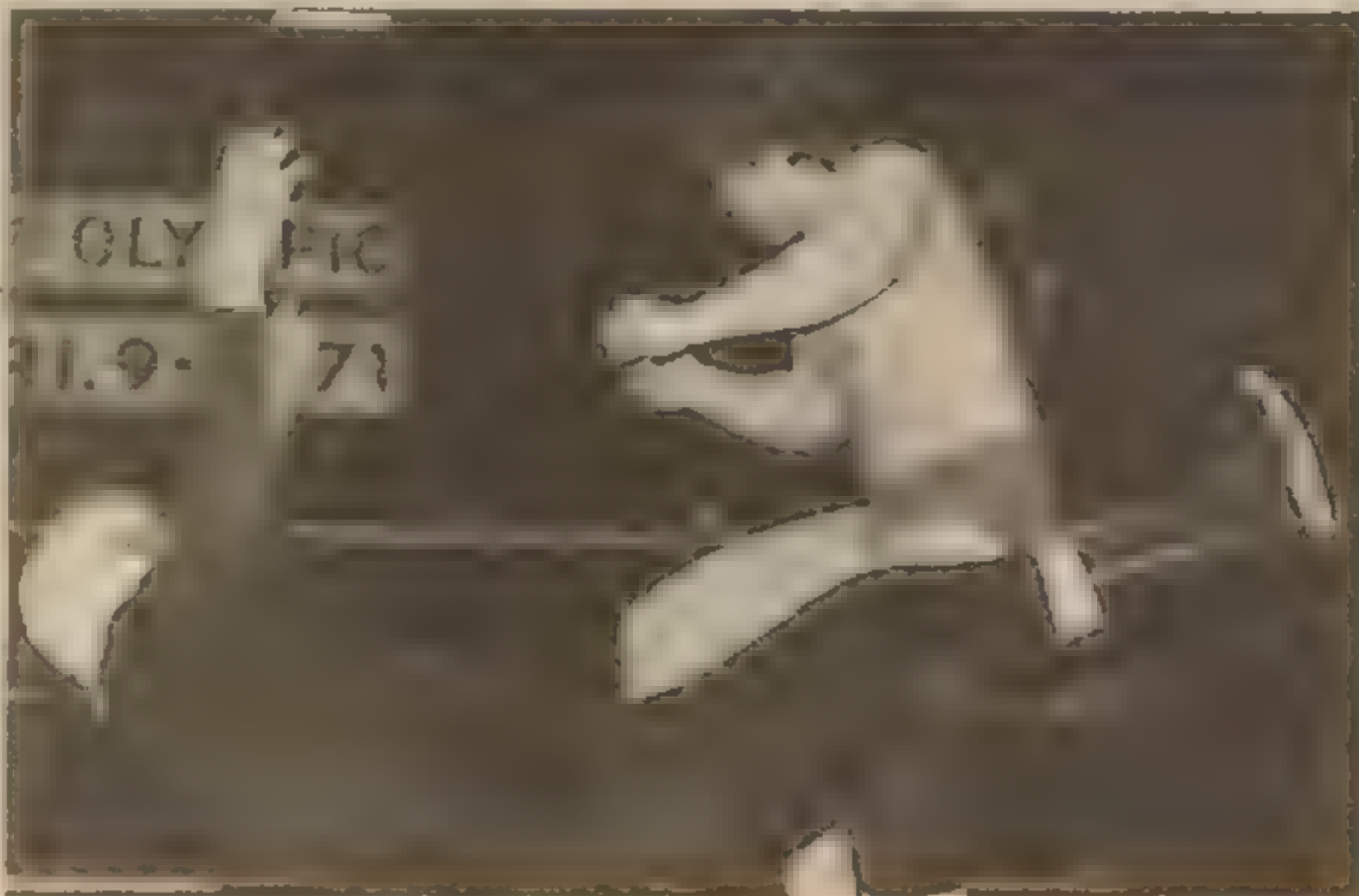
traveling ASK demonstration team, rated the number one karate exhibition team in the Southwest; created unique karate exhibitions which included breaking hardwood boards with hands, feet, and head; instructed karate for four years; trained and worked out with World Middleweight Karate champion Bill Wallace.

By age 18, Pritchard was already a licensed second, time-keeper, and referee. "That was a very important time for me," Tom said. "I was getting myself into condition through Martial Arts and I was getting a great deal of exposure to wrestling with my job."

"Most importantly, though, the wrestlers all knew what my ambitions were, and they went out of their way to help me. I owe a great deal to guys like Mark Lewin, Nick Kozak, and Bill White."



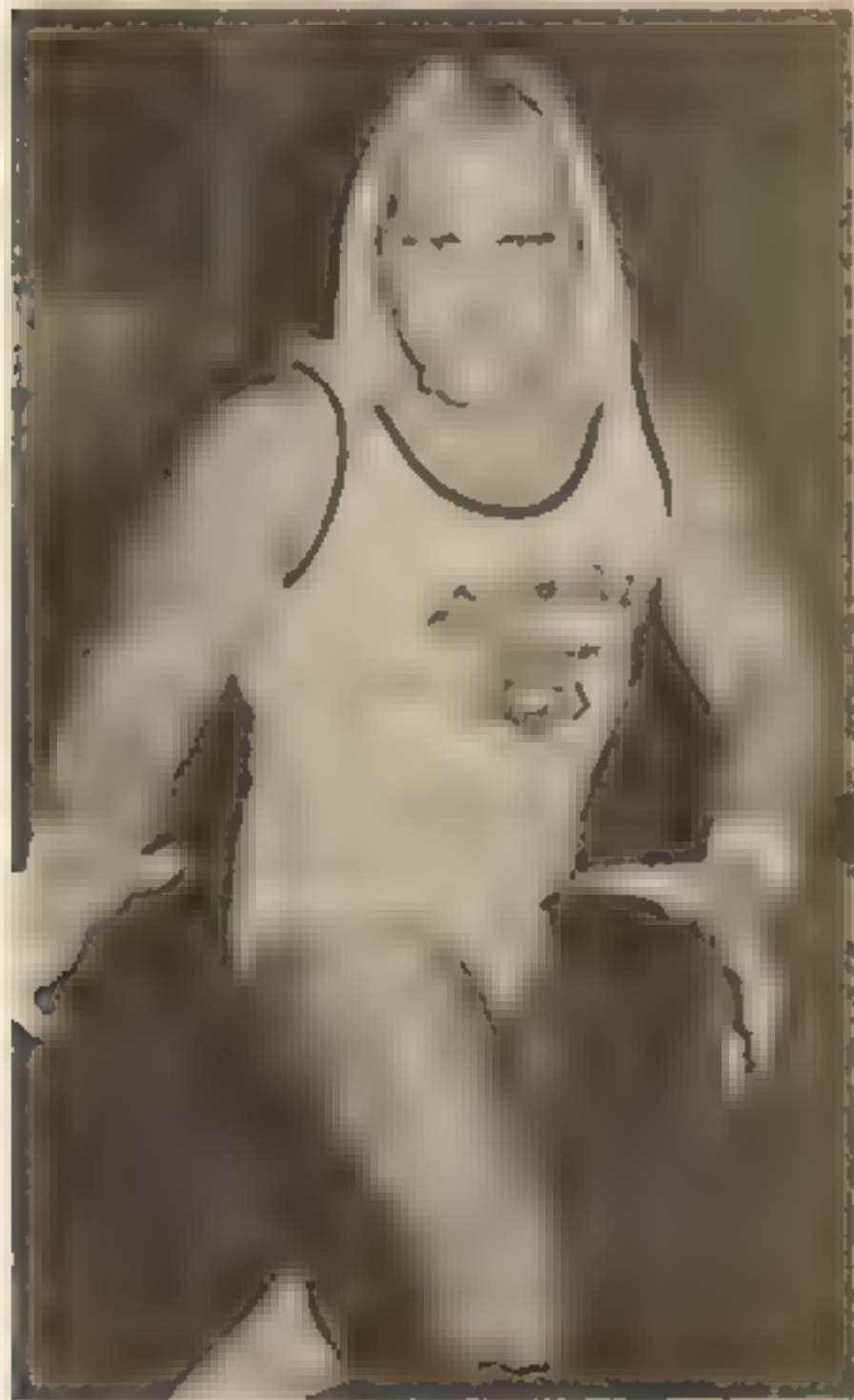
A master of the Martial Arts, Pritchard is particularly adept at bringing his opponent off his feet. John Tolos appears to be shocked as he falls to the canvas as the result of a swinging arm tripout (above). Tom brings The Assassin to the mat with a shoulder block as he bounds off the ropes (below).



CORRESPONDENT REPORTS

(Continued from Page 8)

main event, Andre took on Hulk Hogan. Andre controlled most of the match with a dazzling array of headbutts, mule kicks, and bodyslams. Hogan came back with his loaded arm band and pounded Andre. The Giant was able to rip the band off Hulk's arm and knock him out of the ring. Then Andre came back again to fill in for an ailing Ivan Putski. Despite



exhaustion, he managed to whip the fiendish Hangman.

In other matches: Bob Backlund retained his WWF title by feuding off the challenge of Ken Patera . . . Tony Garea and S.D. Jones downed Jim Dugan and Frank Savage . . . Johnny Rodz used an elbowsmash to finish off Angelo Gomez . . . Jose Estrada slipped by Steve King.

ABILENE, TX—Correspondent: Jennifer Neville—Newly crowned American Heavyweight Champion Kerry Von Erich defended his coveted title against former champion and arch-rival Gino Hernandez. Kerry's brilliant scientific wrestling style baffled Hernandez, but the rulebreaker



The latest in the series of classic matches between gargantuans Hulk Hogan (left) and Andre the Giant had an extremely unusual finish when Andre pummeled Hogan into near unconsciousness with his own loaded elbow pad forcing a countout. Newly crowned American champion Kerry Von Erich (above) won by disqualification over Gino Hernandez.

responded with brutality. Both men flung fiery maneuvers until Hernandez went one step too far and was disqualified for throwing Von Erich over the top rope.

In other matches: David Von Erich won by disqualification over Killer Brooks . . . Kevin Von Erich beat Gary Young . . . Raul Mata stopped Nick Adams.

TACOMA, WA—Correspondent: Ken Hamblin—The Pavillion was the scene of top mat action as Jay Youngblood battled Playboy Buddy Rose. Youngblood, back in the area after a lengthy stay in the Mid-Atlantic, wanted revenge for Rose's sadistic attack nearly two years ago. But Rose was prepared and slammed Youngblood's arm into the corner post. After three bludgeons, Youngblood lost his temper and smashed Rose into the corner post. Time and again Youngblood flung Rose around the ring until the rulebreaker couldn't continue.

In other matches: Lord Jonathan Boyd lost a rough one to Rip Oliver . . . Jimmy Afi downed The Destroyer . . . Buzz Sawyer drubbed Ed Wiskowski . . . Cowboy Lang and Lone Eagle downed Billy the Kid and Little Tokyo.

TORONTO, CANADA—Correspondent: Brian Damoff—A no-disqualification match pitted Mid-Atlantic tag team champions Paul Jones and Masked Superstar against former NWA champions Jimmy Snuka and Ray Stevens. Immediately Snuka and Stevens double-teamed Jones and choked him. But Superstar rescued his partner and fought both the foes at once. Despite numerous cheating tactics and low blows, Superstar finally caught Snuka with a savage shoulder block for the win.

In other matches: Angelo Mosca won by a countout over Hussein Arab . . . Ivan Koloff cheated past Steve Travis. □

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YOU ASKED US

(Continued from Page 10)



Blond-haired Jesse Ventura feels he and Adrian Adonis have that certain chemistry needed to be a great tag team (above). Bruno Sammartino has to be restrained by referee Dick Kroll and manager Arnold Skoaland as he tries to get at a thoroughly beaten Larry Zbyszko (below).

Q: "Please ask my favorite wrestler, Jesse Ventura, how he knew his teaming with Adrian Adonis would work so well. They are spectacular."
—Ken Zalewski, Chicago, IL

A: "Sometimes there's a chemistry, do you understand, a certain thing which makes you realize you can trust someone. All you gotta do is look at the dude. Like Greg Gagne. All you gotta do is look at him to understand he's a sniveling wimp and coward who ain't worth the powder it'd take to blow him up. But Adrian and me are brothers. I'd trust him with my life. When you got that kinda friendship working, you know it'll be super. Besides, ain't like we got any



knows my opinion of that doggone creep Zbyszko. He's nothing but a low-down lying bum. As for Hogan, he can't do anything but flex his muscles and repeat what Blassie whispers into his ears. Wrestling has no place for this type of bum."

competition around here. When Greg Gagne and Jim Brunzell are your toughest opponents, it's almost like we're stealin' our money."

Q: "I'd appreciate Rick Martel explaining how it feels to already have won the WWF tag team title as a relative

newcomer to the area and what it is like having Tony Garea as a partner?"—Gail Schaff, Scotia, NY

A: "Oh, it feels super, Gail, really great," gushed Martel. "All wrestlers dream of winning a major championship and the night we whipped The Samoans and won the title was the greatest night of my life. Having Tony as a



Tony Garea and Rick Martel have their arms raised in victory after a WWF title defense. Young Martel claims to have learned a great deal from his veteran partner.

partner is very important to me. I've learned a great deal from Tony about wrestling and life in general."

Q: "What does Stan Stasiak think about the Von Erich family?"—Pedro Guerrero, San Antonio, TX

A: "I think they're fools, little baby-faced fools. You could take all their talent, put it into a thimble and have room for a dill pickle, hah, I like that one," laughed Stasiak. "Really, I don't think much about the Von Erichs 'cause I'd only fall asleep. They ain't worth my precious brain energy." □

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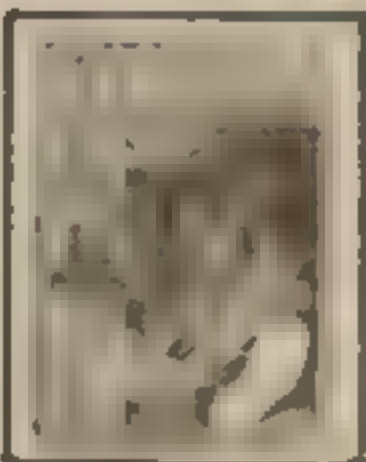
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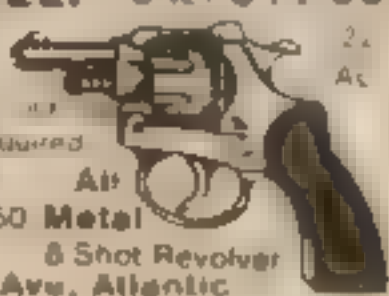
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WHAT'S HAPPENING

(Continued from Page 12)

Georgia . . . Ted DiBiase and Robert Fuller are the number-one contenders for The Freebirds' Georgia state belts.

Fred Blassie has promised his charger Stan Hansen a \$10,000 bonus if he can break Bob Backlund's neck as he did to Bruno Sammartino several years ago. "People want to know why I want that geek's neck broken," Blassie says. "I'll tell you why. That punk kid and his manager Arnold Skoaland waited for me in the back alley

of an arena in Brooklyn, New York. When I got within their range, they smashed me over the head with a 2 x 4. When I hit the ground they kicked me repeatedly. Thank goodness a security guard came to my aid. They would have killed me. I sustained several injuries and had to be hospitalized for a few weeks. Revenge will be sweet!"

As of this writing, Lou Albano's Moondogs have been unable to win the WWF tag team belts from Tony Garea and Rick



Hospitalized with injuries he claims he sustained in an assault by Bob Backlund and Arnold Skoaland, Fred Blassie (above) vows revenge. "Stan Hansen will break their necks for me," he warns.

Martel. Albano has a simple explanation: "I want my boys to let Garea and Martel taste the good life for a while, so when I finally give the command, 'sic 'em,' those punks will really be in the doghouse, daddy."

The Mongolian Stomper and manager Jim Dillon say they have a photograph of Mr. Wrestling II without his mask and unless II leaves the Georgia area, they will show it on television and ruin his career . . . Ole Anderson has joined brother Gene in the Mid-Atlantic area. It appears that Gene wants to team with Ole and also manage wrestlers at the same time. Whether or not he will be successful remains to be seen.

Greg Valentine has agreed to take some matches in Detroit. Greg's old enemy Dino Bravo is wrestling there and Valentine wants to "finish some old business," as he said . . . Brad Rheingans, a former wrestler on the United States Olympic team, has turned pro. He is wrestling in the AWA and already has his hands full with Jesse Ventura and Adrian Adonis. "He's an insult to our country," says Adonis. "We would have been awfully embarrassed if our Olympic team had gone to Moscow and he had to wrestle. We'll end his pro career very quickly."

Jim Garvin insists that he has shattered the so-called perfect record of Paul Ellering. "I hear that Ellering is saying that he is undefeated in 62 matches. That is a crock of bull. Everyone knows I whipped him once and can do it a thousand times. He's a braggart."

Ellering insists that Garvin is lying. "I am undefeated," he says. "I don't care what anyone says, I know the truth!"

And that's what's happening. See you next time. ☐

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Several times, Mascaras has lost disputed decisions to Harley Race, but he feels it is only a matter of time before he can gain a clearcut victory and become the first masked NWA champion.

in California.

Q: Mil, let's discuss world titles. You have wrestled Harley Race several times for the belt. Why haven't you defeated him?

A: I make no excuses. Race is a very good wrestler. He is an excellent competitor. I will be able to beat Harley Race, possibly the next time we wrestle. And if not then, maybe the next.

Q: We know for a fact that Race has used technicalities to retain his belt against you. If not for the technicalities, you would be champion.

A: I do not look at it that way. I

just look at it that I did not win the belt, but I will get another chance if I deserve it.

Q: What about a match against Bob Backlund, the WWF champion?

A: I would love to wrestle Bob because it would be a fine scientific contest.

Q: Can you beat him?

A: Yes, I think so.

Q: Why are you better than him?

A: I did not say I am better than him. I just feel I can beat him.

Q: Would your experience give you the edge?

A: Among other things. I feel

that my style is the type of style that Bob Backlund would have nothing but trouble against. My style can beat his style, in my opinion. But let me reiterate, he is a great wrestler and a fine champion.

Q: Let's talk about your style. We notice that you don't fly around as often as you did let's say two years ago.



Through the years, Mascaras has served as a "policeman" for scientific wrestling. Above, Mil handcuffs Ox Baker.

A: That is not necessarily true. I use different strategies for different opponents. For Tolos, I flew. For an opponent like Ivan Koloff, I prefer to wrestle sure-footed.

Q: It's the old question, but I have to ask.

A: When will I unmask?

Q: Mindreading again!

A: The day I have had enough and decide to hang the trunks up, I will also hang the masks up. Then the world will see what I look like.

Q: Will they be surprised?

A: That all depends on what they expect to see. ☐

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THUMBS UP, THUMBS DOWN

(Continued from Page 18)



THUMBS UP to Tony Atlas: Here is a man whose very existence defines the word courage. Not content with beating back the challenge of Dennis Condrey down in Georgia, Atlas again ventured north to meet Ernie Ladd head-on. Apparently wherever trouble erupts, Atlas places himself in its path.

THUMBS DOWN to Kevin Sullivan: A tired refrain, but one which must be heard. Kevin Sullivan has turned rulebreaker. He doesn't care about those who supported and loved and advised him. All Sullivan cares about is the big, quick buck. It's getting quite wearying writing about traitors. Instead, good guys should punish them.



THUMBS UP to Bruiser Brodie: Things haven't been easy for Mr. Brodie. Originally, his maniacal lifestyle alienated fans unable to identify with a man better suited for a rubber room. But after a while, Texas fans grew to appreciate and love Brodie. Now Bruiser's hoped-for NWA title shot is threatened by Stan Stasiak. Despite the threat, Brodie hasn't lost his sense of humor.



THUMBS DOWN to Jesse Ventura: He's had ample opportunities to reform and try and wrestle on the straight side of the sport. Yet Ventura repeatedly rejects such notions and focuses all his considerable energies and skills toward evil. Someone like Ventura will never learn his lesson until soundly thrashed, treatment he richly deserves. ☐



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BACKLUND-KHAN

(Continued from Page 35)



Khan, who knows the locations of all the pressure points, tortures Backlund (above). Bob works on both sides of Khan's head (below).



succession of fiery bouts. But it was one instance, one barrage of maneuvers and counter-manuevers which may have saved Backlund's WWF championship.

Backlund snared Inoki in a piledriver. When Antonio twisted and tried to free himself, Backlund skillfully applied the atomic spinecrusher, thwarting Inoki's martial arts maneuvers.

"From that one point in the match," recalled Backlund, "I learned how to beat back a martial arts charge."

It did Backlund well to pick up that little pointer. Once back in the United States, Backlund met savage, cruel Killer Khan. Their match was particularly brutal and, midway through the match, Khan started grabbing the advantage.

"I sweated a little right then and there," said Skoaland.

Khan started wearing Backlund down. But the champion drew on his resources to snare Khan in a piledriver. The sadistic rulebreaker started using martial arts, just like Inoki tried to do. But Backlund had learned his lesson well.

"It was almost pure instinct," said Backlund.



Backlund ducks under the onrushing Khan, sending the Mongolian in flight across the ring. Backlund will forever be thankful that manager Arnold Skoaland insisted he wrestle in Japan. The preparation was invaluable.

Swiftly, brilliantly, Backlund reformed the piledriver into his legendary atomic spinecrusher, finishing off Khan.

Afterwards, Backlund, happy, though tired, sat on the stool, a white towel draped around his broad shoulders.

"What would've happened if I hadn't been in Japan?" Backlund looked up at Skoaland. They exchanged mischievous grins.

"I don't know," grinned Skoaland.

"I do," grinned back Backlund. "My belt would be around someone else's waist. But it's not, thanks to Mr. Skoaland over there."

"Ah," said Skoaland, waving his hand. "Just doing my job." □

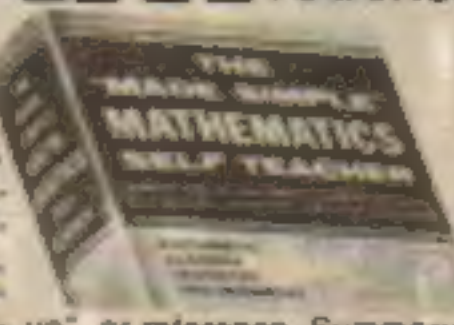
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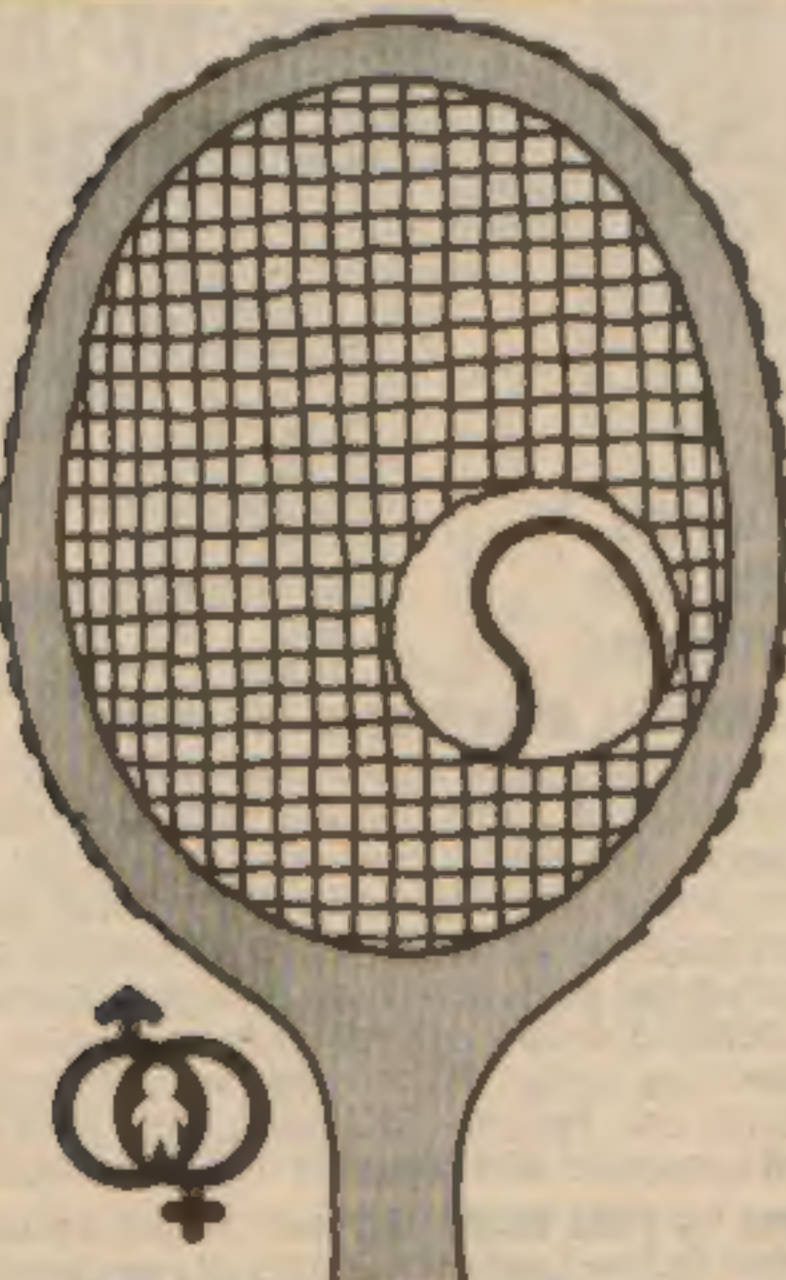
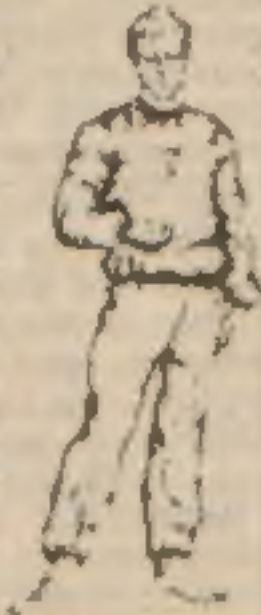
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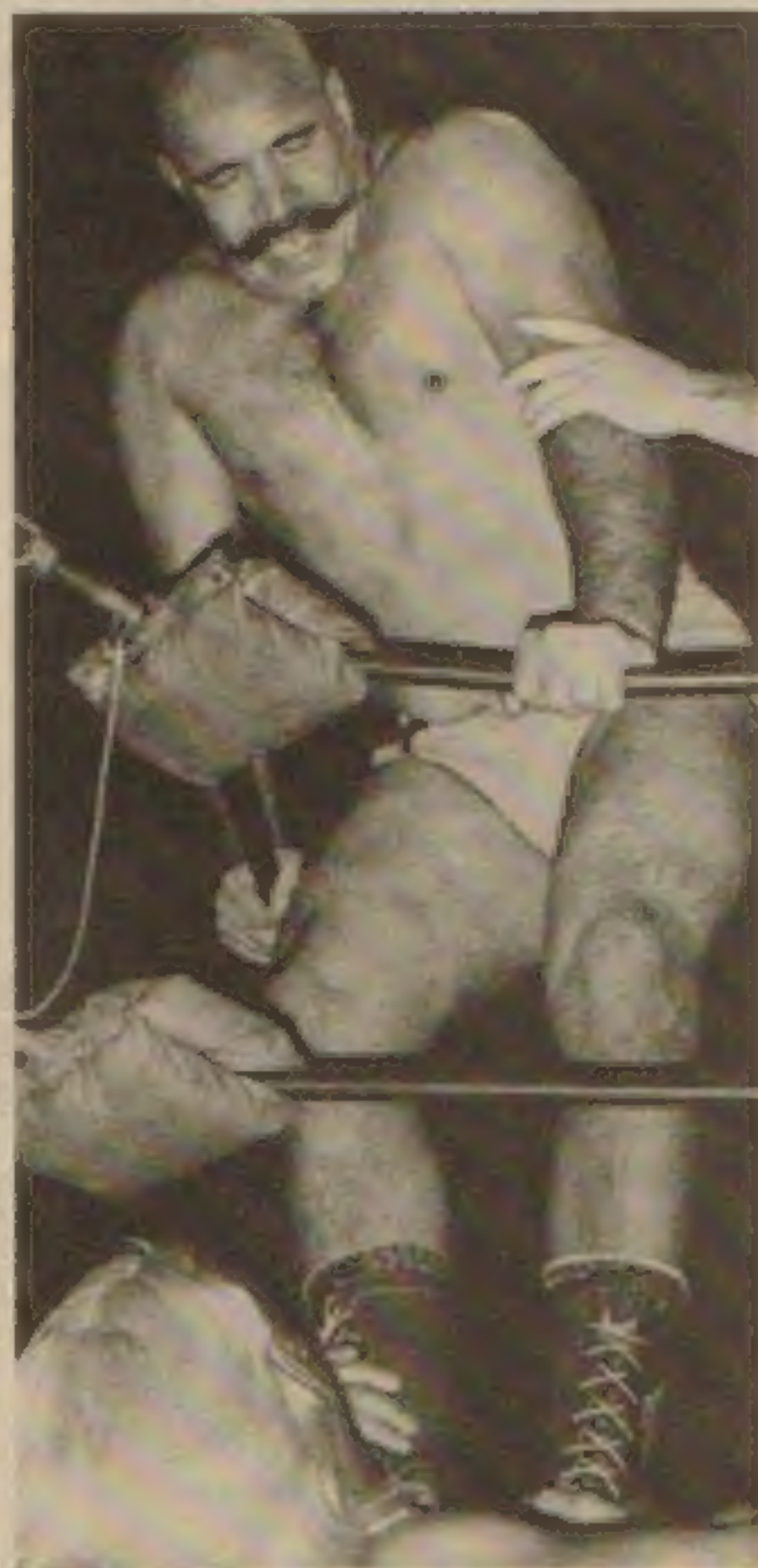


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HUSSEIN ARAB

(Continued from Page 37)



Though Hussein Arab is a superior athlete, THE WRESTLER'S investigation reveals the strong possibility that he might be receiving additional help in his quest for a championship. Hussein battles U.S. titleholder Ric Flair (above and left).

"I do not want any writing or electronic gadgets. I have risked my life. Let me talk and then you see what can be done. First of all, let me tell you I worked as an accountant at a major electronics company with headquarters here in Kuwait, one in Paris, another in New York, one in Dallas, and another in West Berlin." I tensed, fearing the unthinkable link.

"Over the past six and a half months, large sums of money were removed from the company's general fund and transferred into the executive travel fund. Then, those same funds were transferred to a West German bank.

"As I handled the accounting books, I saw these funds shifted without any explanation whatso-

ever. When I questioned one of the executives, he started harassing me. So I decided to check things on my own.

"I learned that a great deal of money had been deposited to one account in America. It went to a man named Hussein Arab."

I flinched as if someone had struck me in the face.

He continued: "I asked my boss, finally, after much worry, I asked him why a professional wrestler in America received the money. He turned very angry and immediately fired me. Since then, my home has had rocks thrown through its windows and I received very threatening phone calls. Frankly, I fear for my life."

Why would such money be given to Hussein Arab, I asked.

"I do not know. Perhaps this money could somehow be used to bring a championship to this athlete. But I am a little puzzled why this company would care. There seems to be no connection."

I asked if the name Baron Von Raschke meant anything to him.

"It sounds familiar. I believe I saw that name on a bank deposit slip in West Berlin."

Again I tensed. Then I shook my head. Assuming that Von Raschke was involved, then why would money be going to oppose Ivan Koloff, currently feuding with Arab? Unless, and this was a big unless, whoever wanted Arab champion and whoever wanted Von Raschke to exterminate Bugsy McGraw in Florida wanted Ivan Koloff out of the way. But I didn't understand why. All I could try and understand, with growing alarm, was a monumental worldwide plot with millions of dollars and vast political power coming to bear on wrestling in the Mid-Atlantic area and Florida. Or would the web extend? What if these people wanted all of wrestling? And why? Who was the real brain behind them? I looked up to ask my guest these questions.

But he was already gone. ☐

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